



Senator Feinstein Urges Eligible Seniors to Take Advantage of Medicare Benefit

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Washington, DC – With 2004 drawing to a close, U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) today urged low-income Medicare beneficiaries to take advantage of a benefit available to them for a \$600 credit toward prescription drug purchases.

“Eligible Medicare beneficiaries should know that they can get a \$600 credit on the prescription drug discount card to defray the costs of medications,” Senator Feinstein said. **“The year is almost over and the deadline to enroll is looming for those who have not already taken advantage of the new Medicare prescription drug benefit.”**

The \$600 credit is available for Medicare recipients who earn less than \$12,123 (\$16,362 for couples) as long as they do not have coverage from a current or former employer or from Medicaid. If they enroll with a Medicare-approved drug discount card by December 31, they can receive a \$600 credit for 2004 and another \$600 credit for 2005.

Low-income Medicare recipients also will not have to pay the estimated \$30 to purchase a drug discount card or for more than 10 percent of their drug costs after they’ve spent more than \$600 on medication.

There are about 4 million Medicare recipients in California and the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) estimates that 643,000 people in California are eligible for the \$600 credits.

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